

S.B. 1126 – Does not go far enough, weakens audit

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Testimony – March 27, 2015

Luther Weeks

Luther@CTVotersCount.org

334 Hollister Way West, Glastonbury, CT 06033

Chairs and members of the Committee, my name is Luther Weeks. I am Executive Director of CTVotersCount and an election integrity watchdog.

In general this bill does not go far enough to reverse the extraordinary expenditures in the last election allowed by weakening of the provisions of our law in the last couple of years.

In general this is a highly technical bill and for the most part I can only agree in principle with the many other advocates who suggested areas for improvement.

Unlike, some others I would like to see grants continue to unopposed candidates. Perhaps they do not have to be 100%. Compared to what we have seen spent on recent elections for state offices, our citizens elections fund is a small price to pay. Compared to the ramifications of the billion-dollar decisions made by the Legislature and the State Officers, it is miniscule.

Finally, as a computer scientist, with some expertise in election auditing, I strongly oppose the provision in lines 1213-1222.

Exempting anyone from an audit based on a previous audit opens the door for errors, sloppiness, and fraud, whether it is campaign finance, taxes, post-election audits, or entry to secured facilities. Beyond a door wide-open to intentional fraud, it would encourage candidates to pick incompetent treasurers; it would encourage treasurers to be less concerned with paying attention to details and to the law.

Every day I enter the LOB, I go through security – should I be exempt every other time?

If you would like to save money and hustles for candidates there are better means. You could make the campaign finance laws more comprehensible to treasurers and candidates; you could consider reducing the percentage of campaigns audited.

Remember this is about REDUCING CORRUPTION and INCREASING CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT, not simply about money.

Thank you,